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which alternate dots are worked in a solid stitch, or again the "fond de neige" or snow-crystal stitch found in different varieties of Binche.

The design of the lace presented by Mrs. Pulitzer is composed of three units which are repeated at set intervals throughout the pattern. In the central motif, angels or amorini with trumpets,<sup>1</sup> symmetrically opposed, support heraldic scrollwork terminating in a finial enclosing the initial letter W surmounted by a crown. Alternating with this are two other motifs, one a similar angel or amorino bearing a basket above which a bird with a leaf in its beak perches upon a branching stem. The third and perhaps the most unique motif is the figure of a lion, an armorial device long familiar in the arms of the House of Nassau.

The lines of the pattern mark the hand of a master draughtsman; none other than the pen of an artist could have produced so supple a lion in miniature; and none but an expert lace maker could have produced with such exquisite nicety the perfect alignment of each individual thread.

Mrs. Pulitzer's gift has been placed in the lace room, Gallery E 9, where it may be studied with the other historic Flemish pieces above referred to.

F. M.

## THE DEPARTMENT OF PRINTS: ACCESSIONS

THE Museum has received from Felix M. Warburg its first gift of an etching by Rembrandt. This is a remarkably fine impression of the first state of the *Descent from the Cross* by Torchlight (B. 83). The print is in beautiful condition, with good margins, and unlike most impressions from the plate is full of burr. The etched signature of Rembrandt is followed by the

<sup>1</sup> Similar angels with musical instruments appear in the exquisite veil of the Virgin of the *Notre Dame de la Chapelle* at Brussels, which fabric, however, is a later work bearing the date 1716. The lion motif also is found in the late eighteenth-century laces of the *Notre Dame de la Paix*, à l'église de St. Nicholas, of the same city. See Van Overloop, *idem*. No. 2, pl. 3; No. 3, pl. 1.

date 1654, a fact which makes possible the approximate dating of the *Dark Presentation in the Temple* (B. 50) and the *Entombment* (B. 86), two plates which much resemble the *Descent from the Cross* in their technique. All three are night scenes depending for their rich effect upon the beautifully balanced, quite broad masses of black and white in which they are conceived. They stand out in Rembrandt's work for the vigorous way in which the problem of light and shade is handled, and may justly be considered among his most successful plates. For sheer power of presentment, and especially for the use of light and shade in broad masses, nothing has since been done on copper that is comparable to them except some of the *Caprices* and the *Miseries of War* by Goya, which, lacking the religious background, will doubtless never be considered so fine, although from the point of view of draughtsmanship and design a spirited and intelligent plea might be made for them.

Mortimer L. Schiff has presented two scrap books put together, apparently toward the middle of the last century, by some unknown English admirer of Thomas Bewick. Their contents are most unusual, for in addition to many good impressions of the celebrated woodcuts for the *Land and Water Birds*, the *Quadrupeds*, and the *Fables*, there is a long line of the almost unknown engravings on copper done by the firm of Beilby and Bewick, and of the little prints made for commercial purposes by Bewick after the dissolution of the firm. Perhaps the most charming things in the collection are the impressions of the woodcut book plates and etiquettes, in which Bewick in a minor field struck a note of delightful artistry which has never been surpassed. The most important thing in the books is a series of proofs of tailpieces from the *Land and Water Birds*, which luckily have not been pasted down and have thus been preserved in all their original freshness of impression. It is doubtful whether there are anywhere in existence more beautiful impressions from Bewick's blocks than these. Never having been pressed, they

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

PRICE TEN CENTS

# BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

VOLUME XII

NEW YORK, MAY, 1917

NUMBER 5



A PAGE FROM THE BOOK OF JOB  
BY WILLIAM BLAKE

still have the deep impression, almost like embossing, which comes from the fact that the blocks were elaborately and in places quite deeply "lowered," and were printed on wet paper under a blanket. The physical prominence thus given to the high lights imparts to the proofs a brilliance that is quite remarkable, and enables even the casual observer to understand why it was that Ruskin ranked Bewick after Hans Holbein the Younger as the greatest of all makers of woodcuts. The interest of the volumes is further enhanced by the presence in them of very good impressions from blocks by a number of Bewick's pupils, especially a series of touched India proofs of cuts by or after William Harvey, together with some original sketches by him for his well-known illustrations to the *Arabian Nights*, one of the most important books in the history of the revival of the woodcut in the nineteenth century.

Edward Bement has presented to the Museum for the Department of Prints sets of proofs of the illustrations by Turner and Stothard for Samuel Rogers's *Italy*, and of William Blake's *Book of Job*. The illustrations to Rogers are among the best-known and most beautiful engravings after Turner. Engraved by Finden and others, in the minute manner that he brought to its highest perfection, after water color drawings especially made to be reproduced by this method, these little prints have always been greatly prized by the book collectors, who have long been admirers of the volumes in which they appeared. As they are not original engravings and are known for practical purposes only as book illustrations, the print collectors as a rule seem to have passed them by. They are, however, of very considerable importance as prints, not only from the historical point of view but absolutely and in themselves as works of art. Subject only to the handicap of their small size, they deserve as much consideration as the plates in the *Liber Studiorum* which Turner did not himself engrave. Their appearance in Rogers's rather uninspired volumes was the occasion for the celebrated bon mot to the effect that the

poems would have been dished were it not for the plates.

The series of engraved plates for the *Book of Job* undoubtedly includes the best-known engravings that Blake produced, and has done more for his reputation as an artist engraver than any of his other works, as, unlike the *Songs of Innocence* and the various poetical books, the plates passed into the hands of a benevolent publisher who printed and distributed them in fairly large quantities. Quite a number of the designs are among the finest that Blake made and must always be considered among the most beautiful engravings of the nineteenth century, as well as among the comparatively small number of very great original prints produced in England. With the exception of a few of Blake's own relief etchings, the plates in the *Book of Job* are probably the most ideally expressive prints of the last century, and possibly the best and most poetical attempts to illustrate Bible themes made since the time of Rembrandt. In this connection it is interesting to note that Blake in his Public Address pointed out clearly the intellectual gulf that separated him from his predecessor, for he there speaks of "that vulgar epigram in art, Rembrandt's Hundred Guilders."

The Museum has recently acquired by purchase one of the best-known and certainly one of the most beautifully and elaborately colored copies of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* and of *Experience*. Made by Blake in the last years of his life for his friend and pupil Edward Calvert, this copy appears to have had but four owners before coming into the possession of the Museum. It is thus unusual in its authenticity.

The plates for the *Songs of Innocence* were made in 1789, and those for the *Songs of Experience* in 1793, and were printed from as orders for them were received by Blake. According to John Sampson, the well-known English bibliographer, who has made a census and collation of the copies printed by Blake himself, only about twenty-two copies were printed during Blake's lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Pages

<sup>1</sup> Sampson, *Blake's Poetical Works*, p. 77.

15, 20, 47, and 48 of the Calvert copy are watermarked 1825, so that it must have been made between the end of 1824 and Blake's death in 1827, in this respect resembling the two very well-known and beautiful copies in the possession respec-

The Calvert copy contains fifty-four sheets consecutively numbered, each printed on one side only, which many years ago were unstitched and mounted as prints in sunk mats. They are printed in golden brown ink, painted with water



DESCENT FROM THE CROSS BY TORCHLIGHT  
BY REMBRANDT

tively of W. Fairfax Murray of London and of the Print Room of the British Museum. The order of the plates differs in the several copies of the book, but the pagination in the Calvert copy agrees with that of Mr. Murray's, which has been accepted and followed by Blake's editors as the standard.

colors and heightened with gold, and differ from all other recorded impressions in that they are surrounded by delicate decorative borders of vines, trees, drapery, etc. The brilliancy and beauty of the coloring of this set were shown at the time of The Grolier Club's exhibition of Blake's works in 1905, when all these plates were exhibited and

could be compared with those of several other copies which were contained in the exhibition.

In addition to the value of these fifty-four plates as works of art, they also have the great literary interest of showing the way in which Blake first presented his lyrics to the world, as this is one of the great first editions in English literature. Among the many famous poems contained in it are such familiar things as the Piping down the valleys wild, The Lamb, The Little Black Boy, and The Tiger, which are included in so many anthologies. Well known as the verses are, comparatively few people are familiar with them in the dress in which Blake put them forth, for they may quite probably be unique among the more famous poems in that they were quite as much pictures as poems.

Blake had written the drafts of the lines in 1788 but was unable to find any one to publish them, and was too poor to do it himself. The problem seems to have preyed upon his mind until he began dreaming about it in his sleep. Gilchrist in his *Life of Blake*<sup>1</sup> tells the story:

"In a vision of the night, the form of Robert [a dearly loved brother who had died some time previously] stood before him, and revealed the wished-for secret, directing him to the technical mode by which could be produced a fac-simile of song and design. On his rising in the morning, Mrs. Blake went out with half-a-crown, all the money they had in the world, and of that laid out 1s. 10d. on the simple materials necessary for setting in practice the new revelation. Upon that investment of 1s. 10d. he started what was to prove a principal means of support through his future life—the series of poems and writings illustrated by coloured plates, often highly finished afterwards by hand—which became the most efficient and durable means of revealing Blake's genius to the world. This method, to which Blake henceforth consistently adhered for multiplying his works, was quite an original one. It consisted in a species of engraving in relief both words and designs. The verse was

written and the designs and marginal embellishments outlined on the copper with an impervious liquid, probably the ordinary stopping-out varnish of engravers. Then all the white parts or lights, the remainder of the plate that is, were eaten away with aquafortis or other acid, so that the outline of letter and design was left prominent, as in stereotype. From these plates he printed off in any tint, yellow, brown, blue, required to be the prevailing, or ground colour in his fac-similes; red he used for the letter press. The page was then coloured up by hand in imitation of the original drawing, with more or less variety of detail in the local hues.

"He ground and mixed his water-colours himself on a piece of statuary marble, after a method of his own, with common carpenter's glue diluted, which he had found out, as the early Italians had done before him, to be a good binder. Joseph, the sacred carpenter, had appeared in vision and revealed *that* secret to him. The colours he used were few and simple: indigo, cobalt, gamboge, vermilion, Frankfort-black freely, ultramarine rarely, chrome not at all. These he applied with a camel's hair brush, not with a sable, which he disliked.

"He taught Mrs. Blake to take off the impressions with care and delicacy, which such plates signally needed, and also to help in tinting them from his drawings with right artistic feeling; in all which tasks she, to her honour, much delighted. The size of the plates was small, for the sake of economising copper; something under five inches by three. The number of engraved pages in the *Songs of Innocence* alone was twenty-seven. They were done up in board by Mrs. Blake's hand, forming a small octavo; so that the poet and his wife did everything in making the book—writing, designing, printing, engraving—everything except manufacturing the paper: the very ink, or colour rather, they did make. Never before surely was a man so literally the author of his own book."

The Museum, which already owned the very beautiful and important color print of *Elijah and the Fiery Chariot*, has thus

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 71-72.

come into the possession of the two most famous series of engravings made by Blake.

A very fine copy in a contemporary binding of Stapfer's translation into French of Goethe's *Faust*, published by Motte in Paris in 1828, has come into the possession of the Museum. The interest of the volume—for the translation is stupid enough—lies entirely in the splendid series of eighteen original lithographs by Delacroix with which it is illustrated. These illustrations are of the greatest importance in the history of art in France during the last century, for, while too adolescent to be among the finest things that Delacroix did on the lithographic stone, they constituted his profession of artistic faith and that of the young school which formed about him. Because of this they are somewhat forced and strident, and exhibit their revolutionary tendencies in rather exaggerated form. In addition to their great and positive artistic value, they have the added interest of being the prints which are most typical of the young Romantic School, the prints which illustrate better than any others the movement which is usually associated in literature with Victor Hugo's red waistcoat. They have been said to be as important in their way as the preface to Hugo's *Cromwell*, the text in

which the aims and theories of the new school of writers was first brought forcibly to the attention of the world.

In the present copy these lithographs are all in the earliest published states, two of them in the earliest state described, and nine of them in the second state described. The seventh illustration, that of Mephistopheles receiving the scholar, is an impression of the second state of Delacroix's own stone, which broke after very little usage and was replaced by another by some other artist. In most sets of the illustrations it is this other lithograph that is found. It is quite unusual to find these lithographs bound up with the text as they were originally issued, as in most instances the volumes have been broken up and the prints abstracted.

Among other prints recently acquired by the Museum are a little etched landscape by John Crome and a number of etchings by Alphonse Legros, prominent among which is his important portrait of Auguste Rodin, one of the finest portrait etchings of the nineteenth century. This particular impression of the portrait gains an added interest from the fact that it bears the signatures of both artists.

W. M. I., JR.



TAILPIECE BY THOMAS BEWICK